

# *AFRICA NEWS REPORT*



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**President Bush's State of the Union Address**

(Says anti-terror offensive, domestic programs must not be left unfinished) (6400)

The United States is a "confident and strong" nation and American leadership and resolve are helping to change the world for the better, President Bush said January 20 in his annual State of the Union address to a joint session of Congress.

"America this evening is a nation called to great responsibilities. And we are rising to meet them," he said.

"You in the Congress have provided the resources for our defense, and cast the difficult votes of war and peace. Our closest allies have been unwavering. America's intelligence personnel and diplomats have been skilled and tireless."

Speaking to the thousands of American servicemen and women deployed around the world in the war on terror, Bush said: "America is proud of you. And my Administration, and this Congress, will give you the resources you need to fight and win the war on terror."

"We have not come all this way -- through tragedy, and trial, and war -- only to falter and leave our work unfinished," Bush said, adding that after more than two years without a terrorist attack against the United States, it is tempting -- but false -- to think the danger has passed.

"The killing has continued in Bali, Jakarta, Casablanca, Riyadh, Mombassa, Jerusalem, Istanbul, and Baghdad," he pointed out. "The terrorists continue to plot against America and the civilized world. And by our will and courage, this danger will be defeated."

"America is on the offensive against the terrorists who started this war," he said, "and one by one we will bring these terrorists to justice."

As part of that offensive, he said, America is also "confronting the regimes that harbor and support terrorists, and could supply them with nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons. The United States and our allies are determined: We refuse to live in the shadow of this ultimate danger."

Bush defended his decisions to go to war in Afghanistan and Iraq, and renewed his commitment to ensuring that both countries become free and peaceful.

"The men and women of Afghanistan are building a nation that is free, and proud, and fighting terror -- and America is honored to be their friend," he said.

And the coalition in Iraq, he said, "is working with the Iraqi Governing Council to draft a basic law, with a bill of rights. We are working with Iraqis and the United Nations to prepare for a transition to full Iraqi sovereignty by the end of June."

"For all who love freedom and peace, the world without Saddam Hussein's regime is a better and safer place," he said, but noted that Baathist and foreign terrorists are still a threat there.

"Our forces are on the offensive," he said. "We are dealing with these thugs in Iraq, just as surely as we dealt with Saddam Hussein's evil regime."

Bush noted the controversy over Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. "[L]et us be candid about the consequences of leaving Saddam Hussein in power," he said. "We are seeking all the facts -- already the Kay Report identified dozens of weapons of mass destruction-related program activities and significant amounts of equipment that Iraq concealed from the United Nations. Had we failed to act, the dictator's weapons of mass destruction programs would continue to this day."

Bush rejected arguments that the campaign in Iraq is a unilateral action, noting the many countries participating in the coalition to liberate the country.

Attending the State of the Union Address, as special guests of First Lady Laura Bush, were the President of the Iraqi Governing Council, Adnan Pachachi, Iraq's interim Foreign Minister Hoshiyar Zebari and Ahmed Chalabi, a member of the Iraqi Governing Council, and Rend Al-Rahim, Iraq's representative in Washington.

Addressing Pachachi directly, Bush said "America stands with you and the Iraqi people as you build a free and peaceful nation."

Discussing Libya's decision to voluntarily disclose and dismantle all of its weapons of mass destruction programs, Bush said "Nine months of intense negotiations involving the United States and Great Britain succeeded with Libya, while 12 years of diplomacy with Iraq did not." He said "one reason is clear: For diplomacy to be effective, words must be credible."

In the greater Middle East, Bush said, the United States "is pursuing a forward strategy of freedom."

"To cut through the barriers of hateful propaganda, the Voice of America and other broadcast services are expanding their programming in Arabic and Persian -- and soon, a new television service will begin providing reliable news and information across the region," he said.

Bush told Congress he will send it a proposal to double the budget of the National Endowment for Democracy, "and to focus its new work on the development of free elections, free markets, free press, and free labor unions in the Middle East."

"America is committed to keeping the world's most dangerous weapons out of the hands of the world's most dangerous regimes," he said, noting that the United States along with nations in East Asia, "are insisting that North Korea eliminate its nuclear program," and "America and the international community are demanding that Iran meet its commitments and not develop nuclear weapons."

On domestic priorities, Bush said he's optimistic about the reviving U.S. economy, and called on Congress to take action that will help turn the economic recovery into a lasting recovery.

Bush also discussed the importance of health care and said the administration's goal is "to ensure that Americans can choose and afford private health care coverage that best fits their individual needs. To make insurance more affordable, Congress must act to address rapidly rising health care costs."

And the president asked Congress to reform the nation's immigration laws to include his proposed new temporary worker program that would match willing foreign workers with willing employers, when no U.S. citizen can be found to fill the job.

Following is the White House transcript of the address:

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

January 20, 2004

STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT

United States Capitol

Washington, D.C.

THE PRESIDENT: Mr. Speaker, Vice President Cheney, members of Congress, distinguished guests, and fellow citizens: America this evening is a nation called to great responsibilities. And we are rising to meet them.

As we gather tonight, hundreds of thousands of American servicemen and women are deployed across the world in the war on terror. By bringing hope to the oppressed, and delivering justice to the violent, they are making America more secure. (Applause.)

Each day, law enforcement personnel and intelligence officers are tracking terrorist threats; analysts are examining airline passenger lists; the men and women of our new Homeland Security Department are patrolling our coasts and borders. And their vigilance is protecting America. (Applause.)

Americans are proving once again to be the hardest working people in the world. The American economy is growing stronger. The tax relief you passed is working. (Applause.)

Tonight, members of Congress can take pride in the great works of compassion and reform that skeptics had thought impossible. You're raising the standards for our public schools, and you are giving our senior citizens prescription drug coverage under Medicare. (Applause.)

We have faced serious challenges together, and now we face a choice: We can go forward with confidence and resolve, or we can turn back to the dangerous illusion that terrorists are not plotting and outlaw regimes are no threat to us. We can press on with economic growth, and reforms in education and Medicare, or we can turn back to old policies and old divisions.

We've not come all this way -- through tragedy, and trial and war -- only to falter and leave our work unfinished. Americans are rising to the tasks of history, and they expect the same from us. In their efforts, their enterprise, and their character, the American people are showing that the state of our union is confident and strong. (Applause.)

Our greatest responsibility is the active defense of the American people. Twenty-eight months have passed since September 11th, 2001 -- over two years without an attack on American soil. And it is tempting to believe that the danger is behind us. That hope is understandable, comforting -- and false. The killing has continued in Bali, Jakarta, Casablanca, Riyadh, Mombasa, Jerusalem, Istanbul, and Baghdad. The terrorists continue to plot against America and the civilized world. And by our will and courage, this danger will be defeated. (Applause.)

Inside the United States, where the war began, we must continue to give our homeland security and law enforcement personnel every tool they need to defend us. And one of those essential tools is the Patriot Act, which allows federal law enforcement to better share information, to track terrorists, to disrupt their cells, and to seize their assets. For years, we have used similar provisions to catch embezzlers and drug traffickers. If these methods are good for hunting criminals, they are even more important for hunting terrorists. (Applause.) Key provisions of the Patriot Act are set to expire next year. (Applause.) The terrorist threat will not expire on that schedule. (Applause.) Our law enforcement needs this vital legislation to protect our citizens. You need to renew the Patriot Act. (Applause.)

America is on the offensive against the terrorists who started this war. Last March, Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, a mastermind of September the 11th, awoke to find himself in the custody of U.S. and Pakistani authorities. Last August the 11th brought the capture of the terrorist Hambali, who was a key player in the attack in Indonesia that killed over 200 people. We're tracking al Qaeda around the world, and nearly two-thirds of their known leaders have now been captured or killed. Thousands of very skilled and determined military personnel are on the manhunt, going after the remaining killers who hide in cities and caves, and one by one, we will bring these terrorists to justice. (Applause.)

As part of the offensive against terror, we are also confronting the regimes that harbor and support terrorists, and could supply them with nuclear, chemical or biological weapons. The United States and our allies are determined: We refuse to live in the shadow of this ultimate danger. (Applause.)

The first to see our determination were the Taliban, who made Afghanistan the primary training base of al Qaeda killers. As of this month, that country has a new constitution, guaranteeing free elections and full participation by women. Businesses are opening, health care centers are being established, and the boys and girls of Afghanistan are back in school. With the help from the new Afghan army, our coalition is leading aggressive raids against the surviving members of the Taliban and al Qaeda. The men and women of Afghanistan are building a nation that is free and proud and fighting terror -- and America is honored to be their friend. (Applause.)

Since we last met in this chamber, combat forces of the United States, Great Britain, Australia, Poland and other countries enforced the demands of the United Nations, ended the rule of Saddam Hussein, and the people of Iraq are free. (Applause.)

Having broken the Baathist regime, we face a remnant of violent Saddam supporters. Men who ran away from our troops in battle are now dispersed and attack from the shadows. These killers, joined by foreign terrorists, are a serious, continuing danger. Yet we're making progress against them. The once all-powerful ruler of Iraq was found in a hole, and now sits in a prison cell. (Applause.) Of the top 55 officials of the former regime, we have captured or killed 45. Our forces are on the offensive, leading over 1,600 patrols a day and conducting an average of 180 raids a week. We are dealing with these thugs in Iraq, just as surely as we dealt with Saddam Hussein's evil regime. (Applause.)

The work of building a new Iraq is hard, and it is right. And America has always been willing to do what it takes for what is right. Last January, Iraq's only law was the whim of one brutal man. Today our coalition is working with the Iraqi Governing Council to draft a basic law, with a bill of rights. We're working with Iraqis and the United Nations to prepare for a transition to full Iraqi sovereignty by the end of June.

As democracy takes hold in Iraq, the enemies of freedom will do all in their power to spread violence and fear. They are trying to shake the will of our country and our friends, but the United States of America will never be intimidated by thugs and assassins. (Applause.) The killers will fail, and the Iraqi people will live in freedom. (Applause.)

Month by month, Iraqis are assuming more responsibility for their own security and their own future. And tonight we are honored to welcome one of Iraq's most respected leaders: the current President of the Iraqi Governing Council, Adnan Pachachi. Sir, America stands with you and the Iraqi people as you build a free and peaceful nation. (Applause.)

Because of American leadership and resolve, the world is changing for the better. Last month, the leader of Libya voluntarily pledged to disclose and dismantle all of his regime's weapons of mass destruction programs, including a uranium enrichment project for nuclear weapons. Colonel Qadhafi correctly judged that his country would be better off and far more secure without weapons of mass murder. (Applause.)

Nine months of intense negotiations involving the United States and Great Britain succeeded with Libya, while 12 years of diplomacy with Iraq did not. And one reason is clear: For diplomacy to be effective, words must be credible, and no one can now doubt the word of America. (Applause.)

Different threats require different strategies. Along with nations in the region, we're insisting that North Korea eliminate its nuclear program. America and the international community are demanding that Iran meet its commitments and not develop nuclear weapons. America is committed to keeping the world's most dangerous

weapons out of the hands of the most dangerous regimes. (Applause.)

When I came to this rostrum on September the 20th, 2001, I brought the police shield of a fallen officer, my reminder of lives that ended, and a task that does not end. I gave to you and to all Americans my complete commitment to securing our country and defeating our enemies. And this pledge, given by one, has been kept by many.

You in the Congress have provided the resources for our defense, and cast the difficult votes of war and peace. Our closest allies have been unwavering. America's intelligence personnel and diplomats have been skilled and tireless. And the men and women of the American military -- they have taken the hardest duty. We've seen their skill and their courage in armored charges and midnight raids, and lonely hours on faithful watch. We have seen the joy when they return, and felt the sorrow when one is lost. I've had the honor of meeting our servicemen and women at many posts, from the deck of a carrier in the Pacific to a mess hall in Baghdad.

Many of our troops are listening tonight. And I want you and your families to know: America is proud of you. And my administration, and this Congress, will give you the resources you need to fight and win the war on terror. (Applause.)

I know that some people question if America is really in a war at all. They view terrorism more as a crime, a problem to be solved mainly with law enforcement and indictments. After the World Trade Center was first attacked in 1993, some of the guilty were indicted and tried and convicted, and sent to prison. But the matter was not settled. The terrorists were still training and plotting in other nations, and drawing up more ambitious plans. After the chaos and carnage of September the 11th, it is not enough to serve our enemies with legal papers. The terrorists and their supporters declared war on the United States, and war is what they got. (Applause.)

Some in this chamber, and in our country, did not support the liberation of Iraq. Objections to war often come from principled motives. But let us be candid about the consequences of leaving Saddam Hussein in power. We're seeking all the facts. Already, the Kay Report identified dozens of weapons of mass destruction-related program activities and significant amounts of equipment that Iraq concealed from the United Nations. Had we failed to act, the dictator's weapons of mass destruction programs would continue to this day. Had we failed to act, Security Council resolutions on Iraq would have been revealed as empty threats, weakening the United Nations and encouraging defiance by dictators around the world. Iraq's torture chambers would still be filled with victims, terrified and innocent. The killing fields of Iraq -- where hundreds of thousands of men and women and children vanished into the sands -- would still be known only to the killers. For all who love freedom and peace, the world without Saddam Hussein's regime is a better and safer place. (Applause.)

Some critics have said our duties in Iraq must be internationalized. This particular criticism is hard to explain to our partners in Britain, Australia, Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, Thailand, Italy, Spain, Poland, Denmark, Hungary, Bulgaria, Ukraine, Romania, the Netherlands -- (applause) -- Norway, El Salvador, and the 17 other countries that have committed troops to Iraq. (Applause.) As we debate at home, we must never ignore the vital contributions of our international partners, or dismiss their sacrifices.

From the beginning, America has sought international support for our operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, and we have gained much support. There is a difference, however, between leading a coalition of many nations, and submitting to the

objections of a few. America will never seek a permission slip to defend the security of our country. (Applause.)

We also hear doubts that democracy is a realistic goal for the greater Middle East, where freedom is rare. Yet it is mistaken, and condescending, to assume that whole cultures and great religions are incompatible with liberty and self-government. I believe that God has planted in every human heart the desire to live in freedom. And even when that desire is crushed by tyranny for decades, it will rise again. (Applause.)

As long as the Middle East remains a place of tyranny and despair and anger, it will continue to produce men and movements that threaten the safety of America and our friends. So America is pursuing a forward strategy of freedom in the greater Middle East. We will challenge the enemies of reform, confront the allies of terror, and expect a higher standard from our friend. To cut through the barriers of hateful propaganda, the Voice of America and other broadcast services are expanding their programming in Arabic and Persian -- and soon, a new television service will begin providing reliable news and information across the region. I will send you a proposal to double the budget of the National Endowment for Democracy, and to focus its new work on the development of free elections, and free markets, free press, and free labor unions in the Middle East. And above all, we will finish the historic work of democracy in Afghanistan and Iraq, so those nations can light the way for others, and help transform a troubled part of the world. (Applause.)

America is a nation with a mission, and that mission comes from our most basic beliefs. We have no desire to dominate, no ambitions of empire. Our aim is a democratic peace -- a peace founded upon the dignity and rights of every man and woman. America acts in this cause with friends and allies at our side, yet we understand our special calling: This great republic will lead the cause of freedom. (Applause.)

In the last three years, adversity has also revealed the fundamental strengths of the American economy. We have come through recession, and terrorist attack, and corporate scandals, and the uncertainties of war. And because you acted to stimulate our economy with tax relief, this economy is strong, and growing stronger. (Applause.)

You have doubled the child tax credit from \$500 to \$1,000, reduced the marriage penalty, begun to phase out the death tax, reduced taxes on capital gains and stock dividends, cut taxes on small businesses, and you have lowered taxes for every American who pays income taxes.

Americans took those dollars and put them to work, driving this economy forward. The pace of economic growth in the third quarter of 2003 was the fastest in nearly 20 years; new home construction, the highest in almost 20 years; home ownership rates, the highest ever. Manufacturing activity is increasing. Inflation is low. Interest rates are low. Exports are growing. Productivity is high, and jobs are on the rise. (Applause.)

These numbers confirm that the American people are using their money far better than government would have -- and you were right to return it. (Applause.)

America's growing economy is also a changing economy. As technology transforms the way almost every job is done, America becomes more productive, and workers need new skills. Much of our job growth will be found in high-skilled fields like health care and biotechnology. So we must respond by helping more Americans gain the skills to find good jobs in our new economy.

All skills begin with the basics of reading and math, which are supposed to be learned in the early grades of our schools. Yet for too long, for too many children, those skills were never

mastered. By passing the No Child Left Behind Act, you have made the expectation of literacy the law of our country. We're providing more funding for our schools -- a 36-percent increase since 2001. We're requiring higher standards. We are regularly testing every child on the fundamentals. We are reporting results to parents, and making sure they have better options when schools are not performing. We are making progress toward excellence for every child in America. (Applause.)

But the status quo always has defenders. Some want to undermine the No Child Left Behind Act by weakening standards and accountability. Yet the results we require are really a matter of common sense: We expect third graders to read and do math at the third grade level -- and that's not asking too much. Testing is the only way to identify and help students who are falling behind. This nation will not go back to the days of simply shuffling children along from grade to grade without them learning the basics. I refuse to give up on any child -- and the No Child Left Behind Act is opening the door of opportunity to all of America's children. (Applause.)

At the same time, we must ensure that older students and adults can gain the skills they need to find work now. Many of the fastest growing occupations require strong math and science preparation, and training beyond the high school level. So tonight, I propose a series of measures called Jobs for the 21st Century. This program will provide extra help to middle and high school students who fall behind in reading and math, expand advanced placement programs in low-income schools, invite math and science professionals from the private sector to teach part-time in our high schools. I propose larger Pell grants for students who prepare for college with demanding courses in high school. (Applause.) I propose increasing our support for America's fine community colleges, so they can -- (applause.) I do so, so they can train workers for industries that are creating the most new jobs. By all these actions, we'll help more and more Americans to join in the growing prosperity of our country. Job training is important, and so is job creation.

We must continue to pursue an aggressive, pro-growth economic agenda. (Applause.) Congress has some unfinished business on the issue of taxes. The tax reductions you passed are set to expire. Unless you act -- (applause) -- unless you act -- unless you act, the unfair tax on marriage will go back up. Unless you act, millions of families will be charged \$300 more in federal taxes for every child. Unless you act, small businesses will pay higher taxes. Unless you act, the death tax will eventually come back to life. Unless you act, Americans face a tax increase. What Congress has given, the Congress should not take away. For the sake of job growth, the tax cuts you passed should be permanent. (Applause.)

Our agenda for jobs and growth must help small business owners and employees with relief from needless federal regulation, and protect them from junk and frivolous lawsuits. (Applause.)

Consumers and businesses need reliable supplies of energy to make our economy run -- so I urge you to pass legislation to modernize our electricity system, promote conservation, and make America less dependent on foreign sources of energy. (Applause.) My administration is promoting free and fair trade to open up new markets for America's entrepreneurs and manufacturers and farmers -- to create jobs for American workers. Younger workers should have the opportunity to build a nest egg by saving part of their Social Security taxes in a personal retirement account. (Applause.) We should make the Social Security system a source of ownership for the American people. (Applause.) And we should limit the burden of government on this economy by acting as good stewards of taxpayers' dollars. (Applause.)

In two weeks, I will send you a budget that funds the war, protects the homeland, and meets important domestic needs, while limiting the growth in discretionary spending to less than 4 percent. (Applause.) This will require that Congress focus on priorities, cut wasteful spending, and be wise with the people's money. By doing so, we can cut the deficit in half over the next five years. (Applause.)

Tonight, I also ask you to reform our immigration laws so they reflect our values and benefit our economy. I propose a new temporary worker program to match willing foreign workers with willing employers when no Americans can be found to fill the job. This reform will be good for our economy because employers will find needed workers in an honest and orderly system. A temporary worker program will help protect our homeland, allowing Border Patrol and law enforcement to focus on true threats to our national security.

I oppose amnesty, because it would encourage further illegal immigration, and unfairly reward those who break our laws. My temporary worker program will preserve the citizenship path for those who respect the law, while bringing millions of hardworking men and women out from the shadows of American life. (Applause.)

Our nation's health care system, like our economy, is also in a time of change. Amazing medical technologies are improving and saving lives. This dramatic progress has brought its own challenge, in the rising costs of medical care and health insurance. Members of Congress, we must work together to help control those costs and extend the benefits of modern medicine throughout our country. (Applause.)

Meeting these goals requires bipartisan effort, and two months ago, you showed the way. By strengthening Medicare and adding a prescription drug benefit, you kept a basic commitment to our seniors: You are giving them the modern medicine they deserve. (Applause.)

Starting this year, under the law you passed, seniors can choose to receive a drug discount card, saving them 10 to 25 percent off the retail price of most prescription drugs -- and millions of low-income seniors can get an additional \$600 to buy medicine. Beginning next year, seniors will have new coverage for preventive screenings against diabetes and heart disease, and seniors just entering Medicare can receive wellness exams.

In January of 2006, seniors can get prescription drug coverage under Medicare. For a monthly premium of about \$35, most seniors who do not have that coverage today can expect to see their drug bills cut roughly in half. Under this reform, senior citizens will be able to keep their Medicare just as it is, or they can choose a Medicare plan that fits them best -- just as you, as members of Congress, can choose an insurance plan that meets your needs. And starting this year, millions of Americans will be able to save money tax-free for their medical expenses in a health savings account. (Applause.)

I signed this measure proudly, and any attempt to limit the choices of our seniors, or to take away their prescription drug coverage under Medicare, will meet my veto. (Applause.)

On the critical issue of health care, our goal is to ensure that Americans can choose and afford private health care coverage that best fits their individual needs. To make insurance more affordable, Congress must act to address rapidly rising health care costs. Small businesses should be able to band together and negotiate for lower insurance rates, so they can cover more workers with health insurance. I urge you to pass association health plans. (Applause.) I ask you to give lower-income Americans a refundable

tax credit that would allow millions to buy their own basic health insurance. (Applause.)

By computerizing health records, we can avoid dangerous medical mistakes, reduce costs, and improve care. To protect the doctor-patient relationship, and keep good doctors doing good work, we must eliminate wasteful and frivolous medical lawsuits. (Applause.) And tonight I propose that individuals who buy catastrophic health care coverage, as part of our new health savings accounts, be allowed to deduct 100 percent of the premiums from their taxes. (Applause.)

A government-run health care system is the wrong prescription. (Applause.) By keeping costs under control, expanding access, and helping more Americans afford coverage, we will preserve the system of private medicine that makes America's health care the best in the world. (Applause.)

We are living in a time of great change -- in our world, in our economy, in science and medicine. Yet some things endure -- courage and compassion, reverence and integrity, respect for differences of faith and race. The values we try to live by never change. And they are instilled in us by fundamental institutions, such as families and schools and religious congregations. These institutions, these unseen pillars of civilization, must remain strong in America, and we will defend them. We must stand with our families to help them raise healthy, responsible children. When it comes to helping children make right choices, there is work for all of us to do.

One of the worst decisions our children can make is to gamble their lives and futures on drugs. Our government is helping parents confront this problem with aggressive education, treatment, and law enforcement. Drug use in high school has declined by 11 percent over the last two years. Four hundred thousand fewer young people are using illegal drugs than in the year 2001. (Applause.) In my budget, I proposed new funding to continue our aggressive, community-based strategy to reduce demand for illegal drugs. Drug testing in our schools has proven to be an effective part of this effort. So tonight I proposed an additional \$23 million for schools that want to use drug testing as a tool to save children's lives. The aim here is not to punish children, but to send them this message: We love you, and we don't want to lose you. (Applause.) To help children make right choices, they need good examples. Athletics play such an important role in our society, but, unfortunately, some in professional sports are not setting much of an example. The use of performance-enhancing drugs like steroids in baseball, football, and other sports is dangerous, and it sends the wrong message -- that there are shortcuts to accomplishment, and that performance is more important than character. So tonight I call on team owners, union representatives, coaches, and players to take the lead, to send the right signal, to get tough, and to get rid of steroids now. (Applause.)

To encourage right choices, we must be willing to confront the dangers young people face -- even when they're difficult to talk about. Each year, about 3 million teenagers contract sexually-transmitted diseases that can harm them, or kill them, or prevent them from ever becoming parents. In my budget, I propose a grassroots campaign to help inform families about these medical risks. We will double federal funding for abstinence programs, so schools can teach this fact of life: Abstinence for young people is the only certain way to avoid sexually-transmitted diseases. (Applause.)

Decisions children now make can affect their health and character for the rest of their lives. All of us -- parents and schools and government -- must work together to counter the negative influence of the culture, and to send the right messages to our children.

A strong America must also value the institution of marriage. I believe we should respect individuals as we take a principled stand for one of the most fundamental, enduring institutions of our civilization. Congress has already taken a stand on this issue by passing the Defense of Marriage Act, signed in 1996 by President Clinton. That statute protects marriage under federal law as a union of a man and a woman, and declares that one state may not redefine marriage for other states.

Activist judges, however, have begun redefining marriage by court order, without regard for the will of the people and their elected representatives. On an issue of such great consequence, the people's voice must be heard. If judges insist on forcing their arbitrary will upon the people, the only alternative left to the people would be the constitutional process. Our nation must defend the sanctity of marriage. (Applause.)

The outcome of this debate is important -- and so is the way we conduct it. The same moral tradition that defines marriage also teaches that each individual has dignity and value in God's sight. (Applause.)

It's also important to strengthen our communities by unleashing the compassion of America's religious institutions. Religious charities of every creed are doing some of the most vital work in our country -- mentoring children, feeding the hungry, taking the hand of the lonely. Yet government has often denied social service grants and contracts to these groups, just because they have a cross or a Star of David or a crescent on the wall. By executive order, I have opened billions of dollars in grant money to competition that includes faith-based charities. Tonight I ask you to codify this into law, so people of faith can know that the law will never discriminate against them again. (Applause.)

In the past, we've worked together to bring mentors to children of prisoners, and provide treatment for the addicted, and help for the homeless. Tonight I ask you to consider another group of Americans in need of help. This year, some 600,000 inmates will be released from prison back into society. We know from long experience that if they can't find work, or a home, or help, they are much more likely to commit crime and return to prison. So tonight, I propose a four-year, \$300 million prisoner re-entry initiative to expand job training and placement services, to provide transitional housing, and to help newly released prisoners get mentoring, including from faith-based groups. (Applause.) America is the land of second chance, and when the gates of the prison open, the path ahead should lead to a better life. (Applause.)

For all Americans, the last three years have brought tests we did not ask for, and achievements shared by all. By our actions, we have shown what kind of nation we are. In grief, we have found the grace to go on. In challenge, we rediscovered the courage and daring of a free people. In victory, we have shown the noble aims and good heart of America. And having come this far, we sense that we live in a time set apart.

I've been witness to the character of the people of America, who have shown calm in times of danger, compassion for one another, and toughness for the long haul. All of us have been partners in a great enterprise. And even some of the youngest understand that we are living in historic times. Last month a girl in Lincoln, Rhode Island, sent me a letter. It began, "Dear George W. Bush. If there's anything you know, I, Ashley Pearson, age 10, can do to help anyone, please send me a letter and tell me what I can do to save our country." She added this P.S.: "If you can send a letter to the troops, please put, 'Ashley Pearson believes in you.'" (Applause.)

Tonight, Ashley, your message to our troops has just been conveyed. And, yes, you have some duties yourself. Study hard in

school, listen to your mom or dad, help someone in need, and when you and your friends see a man or woman in uniform, say, "thank you." (Applause.) And, Ashley, while you do your part, all of us here in this great chamber will do our best to keep you and the rest of America safe and free. (Applause.)

My fellow citizens, we now move forward, with confidence and faith. Our nation is strong and steadfast. The cause we serve is right, because it is the cause of all mankind. The momentum of freedom in our world is unmistakable -- and it is not carried forward by our power alone. We can trust in that greater power who guides the unfolding of the years. And in all that is to come, we can know that His purposes are just and true.

May God continue to bless America. (Applause.)  
(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs,  
U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

AEF304 01/21/2004

#### **Democratic Response to State of the Union Address**

(Pelosi, Daschle say administration has pursued "go-it alone" foreign policy) (2640)

Democratic leaders, in their response to President Bush's January 20 State of the Union address, called for greater international cooperation, charging that President Bush's "go-it-alone" foreign policy has left the United States isolated abroad and without resources to meet domestic priorities such as education and health care.

Speaking at the U.S. capitol immediately following the president's annual address to a joint session of Congress, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi charged that the Bush administration led the United States to war in Iraq "on the basis of unproven assertions without evidence."

"He embraced a radical doctrine of pre-emptive war unprecedented in our history; and he failed to build a true international coalition," she said.

Pelosi said Democrats have an "unwavering commitment" to ensure the United State's armed forces remain the "best trained, best led, best equipped force for peace the world has ever known."

"But even the most powerful nation in history must bring other nations to our side to meet common dangers," added Pelosi.

Instead of "alienating" U.S. allies, Pelosi called for greater cooperation with international institutions and allies to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

"Instead of the diplomatic disengagement that almost destroyed the Middle East peace process and aggravated the danger posed by North Korea, let us seek to forge agreements and coalitions -- so that, together with others, we can address challenges before they threaten the security of the world," she said.

On homeland security, Pelosi called for 100 percent inspection of containers entering the United States, as opposed to the current level of 3 percent, and also for higher levels of security at U.S. chemical and nuclear plants.

Joining Pelosi, Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle of South Dakota said "the state of our union is strong -- stronger than the terrorists who seek to harm us and stronger than the challenges that confront us."

"At the same time, we know that our union can be stronger still," said Daschle, calling for an "opportunity society" built on a foundation of "good jobs, a solid education and quality health care that is affordable and available."

"Only when every American who wants to work, can, when every child goes to a good school and has the opportunity to

go further, only when health care is available and affordable for every American, when

a lifetime of work guarantees a retirement with dignity and when America is secure at home and our strength abroad is respected and not resented -- only then will we have a union as strong as the American people," said Daschle.

"That's the America we want to build, because that's the union the American people deserve."

A transcript of President Bush's January 20 State of the Union address is available at:

Following is a transcript of the Pelosi and Daschle statements:

Democratic Response to the State of the Union

Delivered by the Democratic Leaders of the U.S. Congress

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi and Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle

United States Capitol

Washington, D.C.

January 20, 2004

Delivered by House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi

Part 1: Protecting American Security at Home and Abroad

The state of our union is indeed strong, due to the spirit of the American people -- the creativity, optimism, hard work, and faith of everyday Americans.

The State of the Union address should offer a vision that unites us as a people -- and priorities that move us toward the best America. For inspiration, we look to our brave young men and women in uniform, especially those in Iraq and Afghanistan. Their noble service reminds us of our mission as a nation -- to build a future worthy of their sacrifice.

Tonight, from the perspective of ten years of experience on the Intelligence Committee working on national security issues, I express the Democrats' unbending determination to make the world safer for America -- for our people, our interests and our ideals.

#### **IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN**

Democrats have an unwavering commitment to ensure that America's armed forces remain the best trained, best led, best equipped force for peace the world has ever known. Never before have we been more powerful militarily. But even the most powerful nation in history must bring other nations to our side to meet common dangers.

The President's policies do not reflect that. He has pursued a go-it-alone foreign policy that leaves us isolated abroad and that steals the resources we need for education and health care here at home.

The President led us into the Iraq war on the basis of unproven assertions without evidence; he embraced a radical doctrine of pre-emptive war unprecedented in our history; and he failed to build a true international coalition.

Therefore, American taxpayers are bearing almost all the cost -- a colossal \$120 billion and rising. More importantly, American troops are enduring almost all the casualties -- tragically, 500 killed and thousands more wounded.

#### **MAKING AMERICA SAFER AND MORE SECURE**

As a nation, we must show our greatness, not just our strength. America must be a light to the world, not just a missile.

Forty three years ago today, as a college student standing in the freezing cold outside this Capitol Building, I heard President Kennedy issue this challenge in his Inaugural Address: "My fellow citizens of the world," he said, "ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man."

There is great wisdom in that, but in it there is also greater strength for our country and the cause of a safer world.

Instead of alienating our allies, let us work with them and international institutions so that together we can prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and keep them out of the hands of terrorists.

Instead of billions of dollars in no-bid contracts for politically-connected firms such as Halliburton, and an insistence on American dominance in Iraq, let us share the burden and responsibility with others, so that together we can end the sense of American occupation and bring our troops home safely when their mission is completed.

Instead of the diplomatic disengagement that almost destroyed the Middle East peace process and aggravated the danger posed by North Korea, let us seek to forge agreements and coalitions -- so that, together with others, we can address challenges before they threaten the security of the world.

#### TERRORISM AND HOMELAND SECURITY

We must remain focused on the greatest threat to the security of the United States -- the clear and present danger of terrorism. We know what we must do to protect America, but this Administration is failing to meet the challenge. Democrats have a better way to ensure our homeland security.

One hundred percent of containers coming into our ports or airports must be inspected. Today, only 3 percent are inspected. One hundred percent of chemical and nuclear plants in the United States must have high levels of security. Today, the Bush Administration has tolerated a much lower standard.

One hundred percent communication in real time is needed for our police officers, firefighters, and all our first responders to prevent or respond to a terrorist attack. Today, the technology is there, but the resources are not. One hundred percent of the enriched uranium and other material for weapons of mass destruction must be secured. Today, the Administration has refused to commit the resources necessary to prevent it from falling into the hands of terrorists.

America will be far safer if we reduce the chances of a terrorist attack in one of our cities than if we diminish the civil liberties of our own people.

#### THE ARMED FORCES AND VETERANS

As a nation, we must do better to keep faith with our armed forces, their families and our veterans. Our men and women in uniform show their valor every day. On the battlefield, our troops pledge to leave no soldier behind. Here at home, we must leave no veteran behind. We must ensure their health care, their pensions, and their survivors' benefits.

#### 'THE FUTURE OF OUR CHILDREN IS AT STAKE'

The year ahead offers great opportunity for progress and perhaps new perils still hidden in the shadows of an uncertain world. But you, the American people, have shown again and again that you are equal to any test. Now your example summons all of us in government, Republicans and Democrats, to a higher standard.

This is personal for all of us, in every community across this land. As a mother of five, and now as a grandmother of five, I came into government to help make the future brighter for all of America's children. As much as at any time in my memory, the future of our country and our children is at stake.

Democrats are committed to strengthening the state of our union -- to reach for a safer, more prosperous America.

Together, let us make America work for all Americans -- let us restore our rightful role of leadership in the world, working with others for "the freedom of man."

I'm now proud to introduce my colleague, the outstanding Senate Democratic leader, Tom Daschle.

Delivered by Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle

Part 2: Building an Opportunity Society for the American People  
Let there be no doubt: the state of our union is strong -- stronger than the terrorists who seek to harm us and stronger than the challenges that confront us. At the same time, we know that our union can be stronger still.

The President spoke of great goals, and America should never hesitate to push the boundaries of exploration. But neither should we shrink from the great goal of creating a more perfect union here at home.

#### AN OPPORTUNITY SOCIETY

In his speech, the President asked us to double the budget of the national endowment for democracy, to make permanent the tax cuts already passed, and he asked us to use Social Security money to pay for it.

For the last couple of weeks, I've been traveling through my home state of South Dakota, visiting the people and small towns that are America's backbone. The folks I met are good people. They're happy to help others around the world. But they're asking something, too: what about us? When do our priorities become America's priorities?

Rather than a society that restricts its rewards to a privileged few, we need an "opportunity society" that allows all Americans to succeed. Our "opportunity society" has at its foundation good jobs, a solid education and quality health care that is affordable and available. We believe that we have to honor the promises we've made to the millions of families who worked hard, played by the rules and have earned a retirement of dignity.

#### JOBS AND THE ECONOMY

Our first challenge is to strengthen the economy -- the right way. The true test of America's economic recovery is not measured simply in quarterly profit reports, it's measured in jobs. The massive tax cuts that were supposed to spark an economic expansion have instead led to an economic exodus. To make up for the three million private-sector jobs that have been lost on President Bush's watch, the economy would have to create 226,000 jobs a month through the end of his term. Last month, the economy created only 1,000 new jobs. That's not good enough.

America can't afford to keep rewarding the accumulation of wealth over the dignity of work. Instead of borrowing even more money to give more tax breaks to companies so that they can export even more jobs, we propose tax cuts and policies that will strengthen our manufacturing sector and create good jobs at good wages here at home. We can also show our patriotism while strengthening agriculture and rural America by labeling all food products with their country of origin.

#### EDUCATION

Education is the second key to our "opportunity society." Two years ago, the President signed a new education law. The heart of that law was a promise. The federal government would set high standards for every student, and hold schools responsible for results. In exchange, schools would receive the resources to meet the new standards. America's schools are holding up their end of the bargain -- the President has not held up his. Millions of children are being denied the better teachers, smaller classes, and extra help they were promised.

At the same time, the President's tax cuts have put states in such a bind that they're being forced to raise the cost of college. Since President Bush took office, the average tuition at a four-year public college has increased by nearly \$600. The America our parents gave us was a place in which everyone had a chance to go to a good school, and then to college, community college or vocational school, regardless of family income. Our children deserve nothing less.



## HEALTH CARE AND MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Third, our "opportunity society" is built on the belief that affordable, available health care is not a luxury, but a basic foundation of a truly compassionate society.

Today, 43.6 million Americans -- almost all of them from working families -- have no health insurance. That's over 3.8 million more than when President Bush took office. Those Americans lucky enough to have health insurance have seen their premiums go up each of the last three years. The increase in premiums that middle-income families have seen over the past three years is larger than the four-year tax cut they've been promised. This is an invisible tax increase on middle class families.

Tonight, three years into his Administration, the President acknowledged that the rapidly rising cost of health care, and the increasing number of Americans with no health coverage, are problems. But the solutions he proposed -- more tax cuts -- are not the right ones. More tax cuts will do little to make health care more affordable or reduce the number of people without insurance, and they will weaken health coverage for those who now have it.

When I was driving around South Dakota this summer, I met a nurse in Sioux Falls who has cancer. She told me that she couldn't afford the \$1,500 a month her drugs cost. She told me that she was going to die -- that she was a lost cause. But, she said, we must solve this problem; don't turn more people into lost causes.

We believe that the federal government should use the power of 40 million Americans to lower prescription drug prices and to allow us to get more affordable drugs from Canada -- instead of forbidding both. Drug companies and insurance companies are the only ones who benefit from that restriction -- not the American people -- and that's why we want to change it.

## RETIREMENT

And in our vision of an "opportunity society," promises made to those who have worked a lifetime will be honored in retirement. That's why we believe that America's pension system needs to be strengthened, and that Social Security's benefit should be a guarantee, not a gamble.

Only when every American who wants to work, can, when every child goes to a good school and has the opportunity to go further, only when health care is available and affordable for every American, when a lifetime of work guarantees a retirement with dignity and when America is secure at home and our strength abroad is respected and not resented -- only then will we have a union as strong as the American people. That's the America we want to build, because that's the union the American people deserve. Thank you for listening, good night, and God bless America.

(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

AEF301 01/21/2004

**Acting Assistant Secretary Snyder Surveys U.S. Policy Towards Africa**

(Looks at Zimbabwe, Sudan, Ethiopia and Eritrea) (1140)

By Charles W. Corey

Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- Acting U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Charles R. Snyder gave particular emphasis to Zimbabwe, Sudan and the Ethiopia-Eritrea peace process when he recently discussed the Bush administration's regional policies towards sub-Saharan Africa.

Answering questions posed by reporters at the State Department's Foreign Press Center in Washington January 15, Snyder said the best solution to Zimbabwe's problems rests with the Zimbabwean people themselves. If that's not possible, he said, regional pressure might also have some effect in bringing about positive change.

"When Zimbabwe's internal parties failed to resolve this crisis and it got worse, and it began to bleed over the borders economically and with refugees and other things," Snyder said, the United States hoped "for the region to step up. We've seen South Africa do great things in the region," he said.

"We've seen South Africa step up to the plate in Burundi," he said, praising South Africa's "energetic diplomacy" and citing "the efforts of President Mandela, and, at the time, President Clinton and others to bring the Burundi crisis to where it is today -- where it's very close to resolution. We're hoping that President Mbeki will be able to quietly and effectively get President Mugabe to see that what's going on is destroying Zimbabwe," Snyder said.

"We're still hoping that President Mbeki will step up. We continue our sanctions and other things, but ultimately," he predicted, "this problem will turn, I suspect, because the region weighs in and says this is not acceptable anymore. There needs to be a real dialogue. The opposition needs to be respected, rights need to be restored."

Land reform in Zimbabwe makes sense, Snyder explained, "but not land reform that winds up being another form of patronage and corruption. That's not legitimate land reform...!

"To hide behind that issue is thin gruel these days, and that's what we've been saying. But it counts much more when the neighbors say it because they face some of the same problems.

"It's nice for us to sit back here in a nice air-conditioned studio in Washington and talk about land reform in Zimbabwe," Snyder told his audience, "but it's different when South Africa, when Mozambique, when Angola speaks about land reform in Africa. It carries more weight, and it should. And that's what we're hoping works.

"We're hoping that President Mbeki will win, as he won in Burundi, and he won earlier on Lesotho." Snyder cautioned, however, that "the jury is still out."

Asked about the situation in Sudan, Snyder said with regard to the peace negotiations now under way, the Sudanese themselves set the deadline of the end of last year for the completion of the peace negotiations. "They've missed it, but they've done a lot of good work....

"They're still engaged today in a very serious engagement," Snyder said, "and we're hoping that they can still come to a rapid conclusion in the next several days. It's not impossible."

Snyder cautioned everyone that the "serious" nature of the work under way must be accepted if anyone has any expectation of a real political partnership being formed that is capable of running a modern government.

Such a serious approach, he said, is causing the negotiations to "take a little longer than we would like. But," he said, "we Americans are always in a hurry, and this is an African negotiation, and it's a Sudanese negotiation that has to end the right way."

Snyder said patience is in order. "I think there's a real chance that it can end in the next several days the right way....

"Am I optimistic about tomorrow? Not necessarily tomorrow. Am I optimistic about the next 30 days? Absolutely. I think this agreement is at that point where it's inevitable. The

question is timing, not if they will get there, but when. And I'm optimistic it can be done quickly."

Asked about Cote d'Ivoire and the United Nations peacekeeping operation there, Snyder said the United States is "very supportive" of what's going on there.

"We're particularly pleased that the Government of France, together with parties that are seeking peace, have stepped up to the problem and made it possible for the U.N. to intervene in a more effective way."

Snyder reminded reporters that a debate is now under way in the United Nations Security Council about how to enhance the peacekeeping operation in Cote d'Ivoire.

"We will be in support of an enhancement of that operation," he pledged. "We haven't finished debating the details, but the issue is not whether or not we think the peacekeeping operation is good in Cote d'Ivoire and whether or not what the parties have done to make peace is good or not. The question is how much more and what would make it better."

"We're engaged in this, we're committed to this, and we're hoping to help refine what comes out of it," Snyder told his audience. "So it's not a case of us thinking Cote d'Ivoire doesn't need the assistance. It's a case of what's the most effective assistance. And we'll be there once we finish this debate. And I think it will be in a way in which everybody is pleased."

Asked about the situation between Ethiopia and Eritrea, Snyder reminded everyone that the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission was set up by the parties to help resolve their border problems.

"What we've been saying all along is that the parties need to do what they say they would do. They agreed in the beginning that they would honor and respect what the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission came up with, and they need to get on with that."

"It's not up to us to solve this problem," he stressed. "It's bilateral relations between Ethiopia and Eritrea. We're friends, we value you both, and we'd like to be helpful, but we are not going to resolve this situation. You have chosen a path. We agreed with you with what you chose. But you need to walk down the path."

In terms of the U.N.'s efforts, Snyder said the United States is "very supportive" of the efforts of former Canadian foreign minister Lloyd Axworthy, who has been asked to help resolve the stalemate affecting the Ethiopian-Eritrean peace process.

Speaking of Axworthy, Snyder said, "He's a reputable gentleman who's done this before, and he's going to lend his good offices to help the parties come to the proper conclusion. And in that area, if he comes up with a suggestion for us to help in some fashion, we'll take a look at it."

(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

AEF501 01/23/2004

### **When It Comes to Business With Africa, New U.S. Trade Official Is a Dynamo**

(Asst. USTR Liser touts self-reliance, AGOA, diversification of products) (850)

By Jim Fisher-Thompson

Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- Combining education with a willingness to work hard, the new Assistant U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) for Africa has made the American dream of upward mobility come true for herself. Now Florizelle Liser is pouring her energies into

helping Africans achieve individual and national prosperity through increased exports to the U.S. market, touting self-reliance, discipline and sheer hard work.

Speaking in her office next to the White House, Liser told the Washington File January 12 that her family immigrated to New York City from Panama. "I was raised in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Queens by people who instilled in me the idea that you worked hard to bring yourself up in the world. You got help, of course, but ultimately the responsibility for what you did with your life was up to you," she said.

Liser is a graduate of Dickinson College and also holds an M.A. in economics from Johns Hopkins University. Before being named to her position last year by President Bush, she served as assistant USTR for industry, market access and telecommunications. In that role she helped establish a Women's Trade and Economic Development Center in Sibasa, Northern Province, South Africa.

In her new job at USTR, Liser says, she is determined to promote the same type of grassroots growth and self-reliance that she used to build her own career, and that now underpin the Bush administration's

policy toward Africa, that is, the use of commerce and trade as the main engines for growth on a continent that threatens to be marginalized by globalization -- the free flow of goods, services, information and people.

"This doesn't mean stopping all development assistance," Liser hastened to add, but "Africans themselves have increasingly come to see that trade is critical to development, and so I am focusing on programs like AGOA [African Growth and Opportunity Act]" in order to capture that momentum. Congress passed AGOA, the first ever-trade pact with Africa, in May 2000. Its favorable trade benefits for African nations reforming their economies along free market lines have been expanded since then, most recently by President Bush, who signed an AGOA II bill into law last year.

Now, after four years in operation, Liser said, "I think AGOA has been quite successful on a number of levels in expanding African exports to the U.S. In textiles and apparel we have seen an increase in exports from African countries of about 42 percent." Transportation items, like automotive products from South Africa, increased by 24 percent and agricultural products have increased by about 17 percent. At the same time, "our exports to [Africa] in the first 10 months of 2003 increased by about 9 percent, which is also good for us."

However, "we have a lot more to do to help get more countries eligible," the official added. "Right now, South Africa is the main country taking advantage of AGOA over a wide range of products." Currently, more than 35 sub-Saharan African nations are eligible for AGOA benefits. President Bush recently signed a proclamation that added Angola to the list while dropping the Central African Republic and Eritrea because of their failure to make needed political and human rights reforms.

Liser said she would also like to see greater diversification of products for export among the AGOA-eligible nations. "For example, Nigeria is one of the biggest beneficiaries of AGOA" as the result of lowered duties on its petroleum exports, "but I told them: æYou are one of the largest economies in Africa and should be doing a lot more under AGOA that is non-petroleum."

Liser, who plans to visit Nigeria in February, said one area the country could focus on is "not apparel but textiles. Nigeria has a [manufacturing] base that is already there. There aren't a lot of countries that can supply the textiles the rest of the continent needs for their apparel industries. Right now a lot of the fabric they are

using is coming from Asia. I think Nigeria could replace that need." Also, because of the petroleum industry, "Nigeria could move into synthetics, which is an integral part of the clothing sector these days."

In addition to expanding market access in the United States, Liser said, another priority for her is to get the Africans to reduce "supply-side constraints" that hinder the expansion of their export sectors. According to Liser, this means greater regional integration through customs unions that break down trade barriers and fewer government regulations that act as a disincentive to foreign and domestic investment -- "and we're encouraging them to do that."

Liser summed up saying: "I think regional integration, product diversification and development of vertically integrated industries taking advantage of economies of scale across borders are things we can do. And we can use the strength of some of the key countries we've talked about to help do that."

(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

AEF502 01/23/2004

#### **U.S. Welcomes Talks Between Burundi Government and Rebels**

(January 23 statement by Deputy State Dept. Spokesman Erel) (220)

The State Department January 23 issued a statement supporting talks in the Netherlands between the government of Burundi and the rebel group PALIPEHUTU-Forces of National Liberation.

Following is the text of the statement, by Deputy State Department Spokesman J. Adam Erel:

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Office of the Spokesman

For Immediate Release

January 23, 2004

2004/74

Statement by J. Adam Erel, Deputy Spokesman

Government of Burundi and Rebel Group Talks

The United States Government warmly welcomes the discussions which took place between President Ndayizeye of Burundi and the representatives of the PALIPEHUTU-Forces of National Liberation in the Netherlands on January 18-21st. We are particularly encouraged by the call in the final Communiqué for an end to violence in Burundi. This marks an important step forward in efforts to bring full peace and stability to Burundi. We call upon the government and the PALIPEHUTU-Forces of National Liberation, the only rebel group not to have signed a cease-fire, to continue their discussions with a view toward a complete cessation of hostilities as soon as possible.

The United States government would also like to commend the Government of the Netherlands for its efforts in organizing and facilitating these important talks.

(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

AEF302 01/21/2004

#### **International Health Officials Launch Dual Attack on HIV/AIDS & TB**

(Coinfection of both pathogens is major and growing health problem) (890)

The World Health Organization (WHO) is issuing new guidelines to national health officials on how to approach the dual epidemic of tuberculosis and HIV infections. The goal according to a January 21 WHO press release is to cure patients of TB and to manage their HIV infection to prevent the onset of AIDS.

TB/HIV co-infection affects 14 million people, with 70 percent of those cases in Africa. Tuberculosis is among the most common opportunistic infections that attacks an individual whose immune system is left vulnerable by HIV. Some 80 percent of TB patients are HIV infected, according to WHO, and the lung disease affects about half of all people with HIV.

Screening and testing patients to properly identify who is infected with one or both of the conditions is a key element in the new initiative. Incorporating HIV testing into mainstream health programs treating TB patients will identify more people for treatment with antiretroviral drugs (ARVs). Those medicines can also help stop the development of TB in people who are HIV positive.

A detailed explanation of the new policy is available at [http://www.who.int/gtb/publications/tb\\_hiv/2004\\_330/pdf/interim\\_policy.pdf](http://www.who.int/gtb/publications/tb_hiv/2004_330/pdf/interim_policy.pdf)

The following is the text of the WHO press release:

World Health Organization

WHO pushing to rapidly scale-up measures to fight TB and HIV

Collaborative approach to speed distribution of AIDS treatment and reduce spread of tuberculosis in high HIV prevalence areas

21 January 2004 | GENEVA -- The World Health Organization (WHO) announced today a plan to expand collaboration between national tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS programmes to curb the growing pandemic of TB/HIV co-infection, with a principal focus on Africa where 70% of the world's 14 million people who are co-infected live.

The new policy guidelines define activities necessary to address the dual epidemic of TB and HIV and gives clear guidance for countries on the circumstances under which these effective activities need to be carried out. It will give critical support for "3 by 5", the WHO plan to provide antiretroviral (ARV) treatment to three million people living with AIDS by the end of 2005. "TB/HIV is a deadly combination and needs to be tackled with an approach treating the whole person," said Dr. LEE Jong-wook, Director-General of the World Health Organization. "With effective treatment, TB can be cured, HIV managed, and the health of millions of people preserved."

A key element will be to rapidly expand voluntary HIV testing and counselling in TB programmes, with the aim of identifying and referring more than half a million TB patients who are HIV positive for ARV treatment in the next two years. With additional training for health workers, TB programmes will also assist in HIV prevention, ARV distribution and patient care.

At the same time, TB case-finding will be intensified in high HIV prevalence settings by introducing screening and testing for tuberculosis into HIV/AIDS service delivery points. In Africa, up to half of all people with HIV/AIDS develop TB, and up to 80% of tuberculosis patients are HIV infected.

By routinely screening and testing people with HIV/AIDS for TB, co-infected cases, without TB disease, can be treated with prophylactic drugs that prevent development of active tuberculosis, and cured if they already have it. This will prolong the lives of

people with HIV/AIDS until they can benefit from the expanded availability of ARVs in the coming years.

UNAIDS Executive Director, Dr. Peter Piot, said: "TB is perhaps the greatest and most deadly opportunistic infection associated with AIDS. By tackling TB and HIV together, we can have a significant impact on improving the quality of life of people infected with HIV, while also controlling TB and preventing new infections."

The vast majority of HIV-infected people do not know their HIV status and seek health care from general service providers. HIV testing and counselling for TB patients using rapid tests offers an entry point for a continuum of prevention, care, support and treatment for HIV/AIDS as well as for tuberculosis.

"Evidence has shown that the uptake of HIV testing by TB patients is high, so mainstreaming HIV testing and counselling into TB programmes will identify many more candidates for ARV treatment," said Dr. Mario Raviglione, the Director of WHO's Stop TB Department. "We also know that ARVs reduce the development of TB in people with HIV, in some cases by up to 80%. So promoting and expanding a collaborative approach makes perfect sense."

The launch of the "Interim Policy on Collaborative TB/HIV Activities" guidelines coincides with the fourth round call for proposals by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria. The deadline for submissions is April 2004. The interim policy will enhance proposals which address the dual epidemic of TB and HIV. Already, the Global Fund has committed US\$ 2.1 billion over two years to programmes in 120 countries.

Taken together, the two epidemics represent a massive challenge to public health. Forty million people are currently infected with HIV, and 5 million more are infected every year. According to WHO, one third of the world's population is now infected with the TB bacillus, with more than 8 million people developing the active disease and 2 million dying of it each year.

(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)